

CONDITIONS

EXPLANATION OF STUDY'S PURPOSE: The purpose of this study is to investigate the optimal elements of online course design in online learning management systems in online education.

DURATION: November 30, 2025 through February 2026

EXPERIMENTAL PROCEDURES

- All participants will be asked questions regarding their experience with online learning and learning management systems.
- A formal letter will be sent out to all prospective participants.
- I will also link a webpage with more information regarding the study, and it will be located at www.melissaamato.com/study
- This webpage will offer information regarding the educational study
- This webpage will also offer more information on my experience and credentials for this study. This webpage is meant to offer security and foster trust between the researcher and the participant.
- After the participant agrees to participate, another email with the informed consent form, link will be emailed to the participant from the researcher through Couchdrop.com, which provides end-to-end encryption, providing complete assurance of the participant's privacy, verifying their identity, and providing document security and an interview schedule for the participant to sign up for a preferred time slot.
- After the participant prints, signs, and returns the informed consent form and chooses a preferred time for the interview, the interview will be scheduled and planned for a future date.
- Another email will be sent out to the participant with a link for a Zoom web conference call. There will also be a reminder in this email that states that the interview will be recorded; however, any personal information will be deidentified.
- At the time of the interview, once both the participant and the researcher are present in the Zoom web conference call, the interview will commence.
- Semi-structured interview questions will be asked of the participant. Participants will answer questions regarding online learning and learning management systems.
- At the end of the interview, the researcher will thank the participant for their participation.
- The interview video will be uploaded privately onto YouTube for transcription purposes only.

ALTERNATIVES

You may find information regarding online learning and online learning management systems without the need to volunteer for the research activity.

RISKS

There is minimal psychological risk. There is no physical, social, economic, or legal risk involved with this educational research study.

There is minimal risk for invasion of privacy or confidential information. Communication to the participant from the researcher includes communication through email as well the online interview through Zoom.

If a participant voices their distress of displeasure regarding the interview, I will inform them of their option to leave the research study. If agreed, their participation will cease. This is an online educational research study; therefore, no serious physical adverse, unexpected reactions, or injuries are expected. However, if they are reported, they will be reported to the IRB within 48 hours. Other adverse events should be reported within 10 calendar days.

BENEFITS

Benefits to participants

Participants will be given an opportunity to anonymously (if they choose) voice their concerns and comments on online learning and online learning management systems. The information obtained from this study provides the opportunity for educators to express concerns in a professional capacity and have those concerns and comments recorded. Listening and recording the shared experiences of the learners, educators, and administrators provides validation of their experiences.

Benefits to the field of education

The benefits to the field of education and online learning include providing a firsthand account of an online course that can help encourage efficiency and engagement. Also, the results of this study will contribute to the body of literature that will influence instructional design in the future.

Benefits for society

The benefits to society include the ability for the participants to participate in a study that provides a platform for them to voice their concerns regarding online learning and online learning management systems. The information obtained can help future instructional designers modify their courses to benefit their students.

OVERALL EXPERIENCE

All participants will experience the following:

- An email sent to the participant indicating the researcher's interest in the study and requesting their participation in the study
- If agreed, the participant will be sent an informed consent form, an encrypted link to download their informed consent form, and a Google Calendar link to schedule a time for their interview at their convenience.
- After the informed consent form is received and the interview has been scheduled, the interview will commence on Zoom, an online web conferencing software
- At the time of the interview, the researcher will ask semi-structured interview questions about online learning and online learning management systems.
- At the end of the interview, the researcher will thank the participant for their time

REASONABLE FORSEEABLE HARMS

There are no reasonable foreseeable harms to the participant.

DISCOMFORTS

There are no intended nor unintended discomforts for any participants of this study.

INCONVENIENCES

The participant will choose an interview time at their convenience. If the participant needs to reschedule, the option to do so will be available.

PAYMENT

There will be no monetary payment; however, you will receive my eternal gratitude, and the knowledge that you were altruistic and that you have furthered educational research.

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION

Participation is voluntary, refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which the subject is otherwise entitled, and the subject may discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which the subject is otherwise entitled.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidentiality will be protected before, during, and after information has been collected.

- Before the research study, an informed consent form will be submitted by the participants through an end-to-end encryption process, which will provide complete assurance of the participants' privacy, verify your identity, and provide document security.
- During this educational research study, any information that is given by the participant will be held in a confidential manner. The information received by the participant will be kept in a fingerprint and password-protected computer. Any deidentified data that is published in a dissertation or future publication cannot be traced back to the participant's computer or IP address.
- After this research study, all video and audio recordings, along with any data received through email or any other information from the participant, will be destroyed upon the publication of this dissertation.

PRIVACY AND YOUR INFORMATION

There is minimal psychological risk. There is no physical, social, economic, or legal risk involved with this educational research study.

All interviews and information will be deidentified and anonymized for the protection of all participants. The interviews will be recorded yet kept on a password and fingerprint protected computer. The videos will be uploaded to YouTube privately for transcription purposes only and deleted from YouTube after transcription. There is minimal risk for invasion of privacy or confidential information.

The contact person who would be knowledgeable to answer questions about subjects about the research rights as a research subject, and research-related injuries is Melissa Amato at 985-768-1498 or melissa@melissaamato.com.

By signing my full name, I agree with the above conditions and allow and consent for my child to participate in this online educational research study.

Participant's Name

Date

Parent/Guardian Name

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date